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| Notice of Allowability | Application No. | Applicant(s) |
| | 09/662,937 | KITAGAWA ET AL. |
| | Examiner | Art Unit |
| | Steven H VerSteeg | 1753 |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to response filed February 24, 2004.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 20-23, 30 and 32-38.
3. The drawings filed on 15 September 2002 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All
 - b) Some*
 - c) None
 of the:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

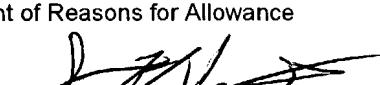
* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
6. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
7. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. Other _____.



Steven H VerSteeg
Primary Examiner
Art Unit: 1753

DETAILED ACTION

Allowable Subject Matter

1. Claims 20-23, 30, and 32-38 are allowed.
2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: it is neither anticipated nor obvious over the prior art of record to have a method for manufacturing a surface structure formed on an aluminum wheel for an automobile as claimed by Applicant in claims 20 and 22.
3. US 6,068,890 to Käumle et al. (Käumle) discloses sputtering a titanium-aluminum alloy onto a wheel with a transparent wear-resistant coating top coat layer thereon (abstract; col. 3, l. 26 – col. 4, l. 65), but the deposition occurs from an aluminum target and a sputtering target with no indication that they are sintered whereas Applicant requires “a sintered target containing 20%-50% by weight of titanium and 80%-50% by weight aluminum”. Changing the two targets of Käumle to be “a sintered target” would require hindsight.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled “Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance.”

General Information

For general status inquiries on applications not having received a first action on the merits, please contact the Technology Center 1700 receptionist at (571) 272-1700.

For inquiries involving Recovery of lost papers & cases, sending out missing papers, resetting shortened statutory periods, or for restarting the shortened statutory period for response, please contact Palestine Jenkins at (571) 272-1021.

For general inquiries such as fees, hours of operation, and employee location, please contact the Technology Center 1700 receptionist at (571) 272-1300.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Steven H VerSteeg whose telephone number is (571) 272-1348. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon - Thurs (6:30 AM - 5:00 PM).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nam X Nguyen can be reached on (571) 272-1342. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Steven H VerSteeg
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1753

shv
March 9, 2004